DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 192 233 CG 014 689

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TITLE Comprehensive Counseling: An Innovative Strategy for Helping Dysfunctional Youth.
PUB DATE Mar 80
NOTE 27p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (Atlanta, GA, March 26-29, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; *Behavior Problems; Counseling Services; *Counseling Techniques; *Family Counseling; Family Relationship; Individualized Instruction; *Intervention; Models; Program Descriptions; *Youth Problems

ABSTRACT

An intervention strategy called comprehensive counseling is presented as a new approach to dealing with adolescents who have major problems in traditional schools and at home. Components of this approach include: (1) a learning environment in which instructional and counseling procedures are closely related through joint planning by a staff of educators and counselors; (2) individualized instruction; (3) group and individual counseling; and (4) family counseling and family participation in the life of the school. In addition the problems and outcomes of a functioning program of this type are discussed. (Author)

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COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING: AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY FOR HELPING DYSFUNCTIONAL YOUTH

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Imagine you could listen to a group of adolescents talking informally among themselves. Imagine these are adolescents who do not get along too well in school, some academically, some socially. Several, of course, are not getting along too well in both areas. Imagine you could listen to these adolescents over a period of several months, and they were not aware of your presence. What do you think they would talk about? What do you think might interest them most?

I'll give you a little more information. There are six adolescents in the group, three males, three females, all middle-class white students. They range in age from 14 to 17:

Now I'd like you to put down on the handout I'm giving you the three subjects you think these adolescents would spend the most time in discussing. Look at Example 1 and write down the subjects in order.

Example 1

What subjects do you think a group of adolescents who are having difficulties in school would spend the most time in discussing if they were allowed an hour a day to talk informally among themselves? List the three subjects in rank order.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Would some of you like to tell us what you put down? I wonder how much agreement there is in this group.

Now look at Example 11. Here we have some actual data obtained from a group such as I have described.

EXAMPLE 1

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED BY SIX ADOLESCENTS IN INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS

Subject	Number of Times Mentioned	Total Time Spent In Discussion (Minutes)
1. Cars	32	116
2. Sexual Matters	17	91
3. Social Relationships	14	82
4. Food	12	30
5. Sports	8	26
6. Hair	8	12
7. Clothes	5	17
8. Drugs	5	9
9. Jobs	5	14
10. Education	4	17
11. Music(rock)	4	11
12. Family Relationships	3	14
13. Films	3	10
14. Money	2	7
15. Television	1	3
Silent Interludes	-	-
TOTAL		500 minutes

After you've looked the data over, I'll give you some additional information about the situation and the adolescents who were talking.

The six adolescents were attending a "free" high school, modeled to some extent on Summerhill, and had come to the school because they had not been able to adjust to life in more traditional city and suburban high schools. One of the girls had set a fire in a school; the three boys had histories of truancy; the other two girls had had difficulties with social relationships and had rejected much of what was offered in large schools in the city. One of the boys was an above-average student; the three girls were average; two of the boys were definitely below average.

The students had a fifty-minute free period before lunch, during which they could study or work with a teacher or sit and talk. It was a matter of choice. The group of six we are discussing met regularly to talk in an informal fashion among themselves. A colleague of mine was available in one part of the room to help with math. Since no one was interested in extra work in math, he was able to make a record of what the students talked about and how much time they spent in discussing each subject. The students were used to my colleague, and they thought he was grading math papers. He was careful to take no part in the conversations and not seem to be listening. He managed to make records often of these sessions, a total of 500 minutes.

I have given you a summary of the results, but my colleague who prepared the table believes the data reflect only an outline of the discussions and not what the conversations were really like. He feels the bare listing of topics and time may give a distorted picture of the real concerns of these adolescents and the significance of certain elements in their lives. So perhaps a brief discussion and amplification of the data may give us a more adequate picture of the interests of the six adolescents.

My colleague and I would both agree, after working with these adolescents, that the subject most discussed, cars, did indeed represent the main concern of the boys and was at least a major interest of the girls. The automobile seemed to represent the center, the core, the axis of the boys' lives. Individuals were at least partially identified with the cars they drove and were evaluated personally, socially, and sexually in terms of their choice of a car. The girls used the same criteria of evaluation as the boys. I'd like to give you a sample of one such conversation.

"did you go out with that tall kid?"

"Yeah, He didn't come to the door, he just honked. He had on this T-shirt with a great big rocket on it, and it had WOW! exploding out of the top. And here I was all dressed up in that blue pants outfit I got for my birthday. I guess I'm just used to more mature men."

"What kind of car does he drive?"

"It looked like it was a Volks once. It was so beat up it was hard to tell. The paint was all off, and there was this printing all over the sides. Things like 'Love Boat' and 'Mess Around in a Mess.'"

"That sounds gross. And he sounds gross."

"He wasn't so bad. Once he got started."

"Did you make out?"

I will mercifully draw the curtain on the conversation at this point. But no date was ever discussed without a detailed description of the vehicle involved. As for the boys, they were also interested in the care and feeding of cars, and each step in the repair of a transmission or a gas line was reported in loving detail. The only interest the six students showed in current affairs had to do with automobiles. They talked about the gasoline shortage that was being experienced at the

time and the outrage of having to wait in line half-an-hour at filling stations. This indignity was regarded as the equivalent of the humiliations heaped upon Americans at Pearl Harbor.

The sexual matters the students discussed reflected little variety and even less direct experience. Several of the discussions consisted of male fantasies about an older student who was always described as "a fox." She was attractive, seemed always to be somewhat distracted, and moved in her own way and in her own world. The boys imagined she had suddenly noticed them and asked them -- singly -- to her apartment. The apartment, as they imagined it, was filled with large cushions, several waterbeds, and a gigantic stereo. The fox, once the door was locked, lost her air of abstraction. At this point, the girls would scream: "She wouldn't let you do that. She wouldn't let you touch her with those grubby hands." They described to the boys the kind of man the fox would really entertain. These men had mustaches and wore tuxedos and bit the fox's ears and wore silk underwear, according to one description.

There were two exceptions to these kinds of fantasies. On one occasion, one of the boys started talking about the Green Berets. He said that as a test of a man's fitness for Green Berethood, he had to cut off part of his genitals with a rusty knife (no anesthetics allowed). The boys kept discussing a number of possibilities while the girls screamed "Gross! That's gross!" I don't know what former Green Berets would have screamed if they had learned about the condition they were supposed to be in. I do know what Sigmund Freud would have remarked. He would have said, "I told you so."

The other exception to what might be called the fox fantasies was the labeling of various males as homosexuals. One of the girls liked a boy who worked at a sandwich shop across the street. "Oh, he's a queer," a boy in the group informed

her. "He wouldn't look at you if you pulled off your blouse."

"How do you know?" the girl asked.

"Oh, by the way he walks. But mostly by my radar."

"What do you mean, your radar?"

"I have a homosexual radar," the boy said smugly. "It smokes out fags."

Unfortunately, one of the teachers wore a pair of robin's egg-blue slacks to school. He was immediately stamped "Homosexual." No one of either sex seemed to question this judgment. In their eyes, he had crossed the line.

Judgment was equally swift when a Jewish girl in the group said she didn't get a new dress for Easter, and she didn't dress up at all for the occasion. The others regarded this as a breach of American traditions, possible subversive and probably immoral. "You mean you wouldn't even dress up for Easter?" another girl asked and shook her head. Then there was silence. Everyone stared at the girl who wore jeans on Easter.

"How come your nose isn't bigger?" one of the boys asked. "Did you have a nose job?"

The girl didn't answer.

As for some of the other topics, drugs were mentioned only five times and were then just briefly touched on, but this may not reflect a lack of interest. It might mean that drugs could be so easily obtained and were such an accepted part of life that there was no need to talk about them. After all, you don't spend much time talking about trees or the sky; they are just there. Four of the students used drugs occasionally, and two of the girls said they had not tried them at all. There was some talk of cocaine, though descriptions of its use seemed to come from the less inhibited magazines, rather than from actual experience.

Jobs were not talked about in terms of future vocations; there were only statements about this person looking for a job or that one finding something.

I'll give you a brief sample from such a conversation.

"You still work at that hamburger place?"

"Naw, I quit. I couldn't take it any more. This guy, he's an assistant manager, but he acts like he's a pimp and we're his slaves or something. He comes up to me and he says, 'Get your butt moving.' And I had all those raw hamburgers on a board so I just dumped them all on the floor. I said, 'I'll move my butt. Right out of here.' He started to yell so I gave him the finger. You know about any jobs?"

No one seemed satisfied with the situation in which he or she was working. Anything that paid less than four dollars an hour was considered "the pits"; the students placed most jobs available to them in this category. For those students, the jobs they talked about seemed to lead nowhere; they were as quickly disposable as a facial tissue.

Eduction was treated in a similar way. The group seemed to see little relationship between education and the future. Education was seen in only one dimension, the personal. It was a world of suspicious and incompetent teachers and angry administrators and counselors who could be easily fooled.

My colleagues sensed a certain strain when one subject was discussed, as if people were afraid to really commit themselves. This subject, Family Relationships, came up only three times, but more time was spent on it than was spent on several other areas. Yet things were generally said in short sentences; sometimes feelings were only implied or lefr floating hopelessly about in mid-air, in contrast with the sharp pronouncements and judgments made in other areas.

"You still hate your father so much?" one boy asked another.

"I guess. I don't know," he answered.

No one in the group gave any indication of having a close relationship with another member of his or her family, except in the case of one grandmother. However, my colleague's experience with the girls in other situations gave him a rather different picture. There were close family relationships, but somehow they had not wanted to talk about them in the group. The effects of a peer group on the expressions of feeling -- and, subsequently, on emotional development -- might be worth some attention.

Surprisingly, little time was spent in talking about entertainment. There was some discussion of the hazards of going to rock concerts, but only the Gee Gees were mentioned as a performing group. The male students seemed to spend most of their free time driving around, while the girls seemed to spend a good part of their evenings washing and rolling up their hair.

One can consider at length what these students wanted to talk about. But what they left out of these discussions may be just as significant. For example, no one mentioned a book that he or she had read. Or reading of any kind, for that matter. No one mentioned politics or Presidents or religion (except for dressing up at Easter), and no one showed any interest in the state of the world outside the narrow circle of his or her own life. The one exception was the annoyance caused by the gasoline shortage, but this was seen only in personal terms.

In fact, almost all of the discussions were centered on the personal and the concrete. Abstract ideas or conceptions or speculations -- movements beyond the completely personal reference -- were avoided. Or perhaps not avoided, the students may never have been exposed to any great degree to an abstract frame of reference. Personal experience, personal opinion, personal judgments (usually definite and irrevocable) -- the students seemed satisfied with these as standards of reference and as the sources of evidence. As we have already seen, one boy was quite proud of his homosexual radar.

In the perceptions of these students, everything seemed to become simplified. Abstractions such as time lost their layers of past and future. Time became reduced to Now. In the same way, all movement and change were stopped, and change, too, was forced into the constricting narrowness of the Now. And the many possibilities and choices offered by the modern world were largely limited to the satisfaction of appetites.

This was a special group of adolescents, failures in most cases, outsiders. They may have limited their world deliberately to avoid the pain of failure; they may have turned away from a future that they sensed had little to offer for them. The harsh judgments they handed down may have been a reflection of what they themselves had known.

A student who had failed many times and was now eighteen years old (a students who was not in the school I am talking about) once asked his counselor, out of a real despair: "What's going to happen to me? I'm not good in school things. But I want to have a job, I want to have a family. I need things, too. I'm eighteen, I've probably got a long life to live. But what's going to happen to me?"

He had finally come to face what he had never said before. But the young people we are discussing here were not yet ready to ask what, for this young man, were desperate questions. The Now, the Me, the motor starting up would push all the hard questions away.

Several of us connected with the school began asking some hard questions of our own. We began to wonder what counselors and teachers in a school might do to help students such as these move beyond their limited outlooks and their loss of past and future. What might be done to help them toward a realistic sense of what the society around them was like and what it would demand and what it might offer? How could we help students move toward an understanding of responsible human relationships that could mean more than waterbeds or smudged, second-hand fantasies?

The students in the high school we are talking about worked closely with counselors and had individual counseling sessions at least once a week. But these personal counseling sessions seemed to be inadequate to meet the needs of many of the individuals in the school, individuals who were approaching maturity in terms of years but who were far from it in terms of attitudes and knowledge and the ability to make realistic evaluations.

So some of us concerned with the situation developed several new strategies which we called Comprehensive Counseling. Previously, all of the counseling sessions in the school had been unstructured, and the development of goals had been left open, a matter between the counselor and his or her client. We left some of this open element in our proposed program, but we also developed a series of individual and group counseling sessions with specific goals and prescribed learning experiences, and these were to be integrated with the academic instruction in the school. So our Comprehensive Counseling had two dimensions: first, it included not only structured personal counseling, but also more structured counseling in the areas of vocational and educational counseling, human relationships, and family counseling. The second dimension was made up of learning experiences that were closely integrated with the counseling sessions and were designed to reinforce them.

In Example 111, you will find a brief outline of our program.

EXAMPLE 111

COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING
A Program for Dysfunctional Adolescents

DIMENSION 1. PERSONAL COUNSELING

A. Weekly Individual Counseling Sessions (Unstructured.

B. Weekly Group Counseling Sessions (Structured).

Examples of Activities:

Who Am I? (Profile Activity)

How Do I Feel? (Mood Figures)

Discussion of such topics as "The Person I Am Most Like in The Group" and "The Person I Would Like To Be."

C. Related Academic Activities

Examples:

English: Study of merican Indian poetry and writing of similar chants

Social Studies: Study of David McClelland's Achievement Motivation and other kinds of motivation (Affiliative, power)

DIMENSION 11. HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

A. Weekly Group Counseling Sessions

Examples of Activities:

Role-playing of conflict situations at school, at work, and at home. Analysis of relationships between people that seem to last as compared with those that break up quickly.

B. Related Academic Activities

Examples:

Social Studies: A unit on "People Who Are Inside -- People Who Are Outside," including such readings as Robert Coles' Children of Crisis (especially the section "When I Draw the Lord He'll Be a Real Big Man" and "George and His Lois"); Bruno Bettelheim's "Joey, the Mechanical Boy;" and "Nasty Virginia" from My Life As a Small Boy by Wally Cox.

English: A study of the changing human relationships in Carson McCullers' play The Member of the Wedding. An analysis of the "Inside-Outside" relationships in Philip Roth's "Eli the Fanatic."

DIMENSION 111. FAMILY COUNSELING

A. Individual Counseling Sessions with Parents of Students

B. Counseling Sessions with Families as a Whole (if possible)

C. Related Academic Activities

Examples:

English: Comparing family relationships on Happy Days with real-life family situations.

Analysis of the family situations in Arthur Miller's All My Sons and Death of a Salesman.

A study of Randy Newman Songs, such as "Love Story," which deals with family relationships.

Social Studies: A study of family communication from the perspective of Transactional Analysis.

DIMENSION 1V. VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL COUNSELING

A. Individual Counseling Sessions (consideration of test and inventory scores, discussions of vocational and educational opportunities and possibilities).

B. Group Discussion Sessions (discussions held with carefully selected representatives from various occupations and professions).

C. Related Academic Activities

Examples:

English: Unit of "The Choices We Make." A study and analysis of such films as American Graffiti and Breaking Away.

Social Studies: Field trips to a variety of industries, offices, and service institutions in the area.

Supervised work experiences in hospitals, day-care centers, newspaper offices, etc.

A study of American society in terms of class structure, mobility and the opportunities (and denial of opportunity) the social structure permits.

In history, a study of individuals, such as Sojourner Truth, who made significant contributions to the society of their times.

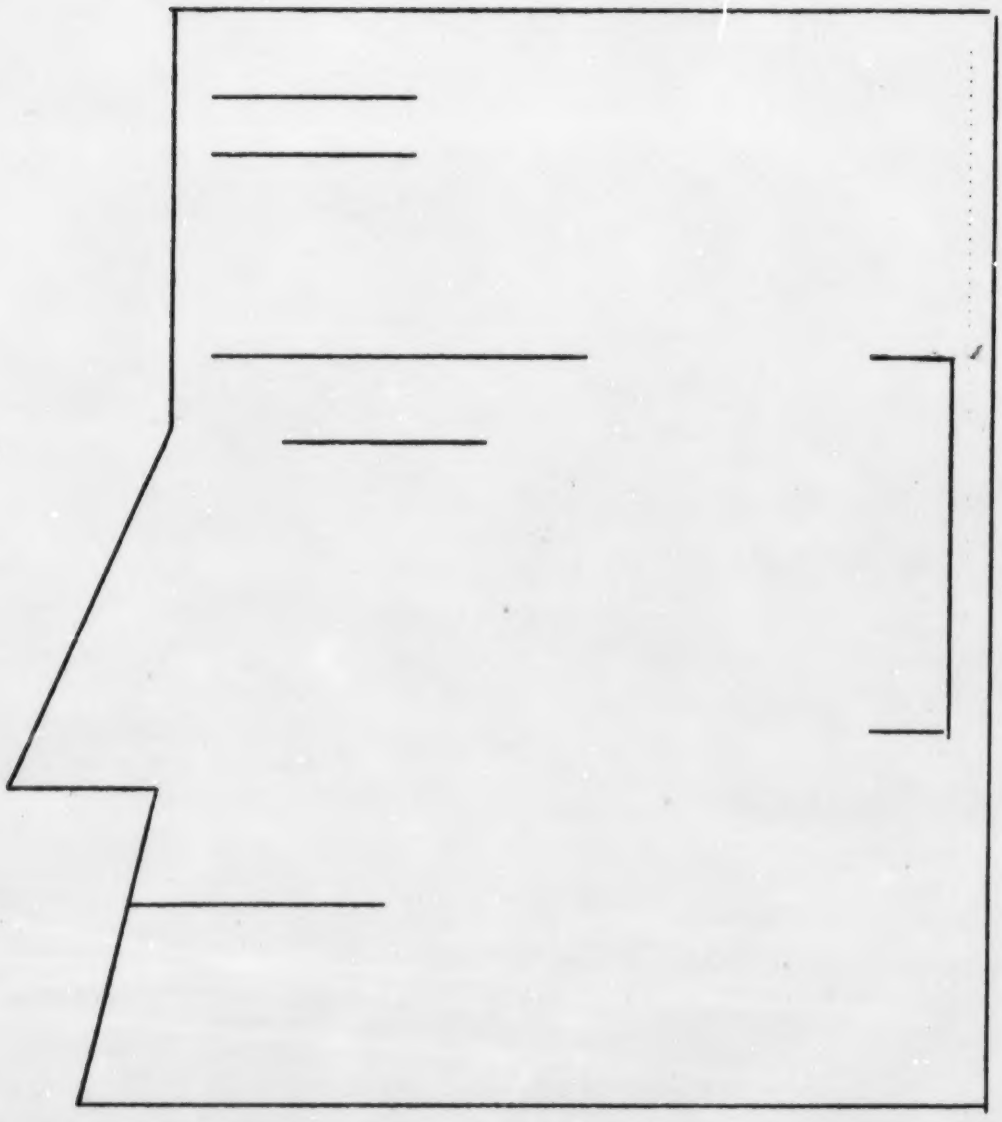
We can look it over together, and I will describe some of the proposed activities.

The first dimension is that of Personal Counseling. As you can see, we have retained the weekly unstructured counseling sessions from the past. A student might have more than one of these sessions a week, if a counselor felt this were necessary. But we have added a weekly group counseling session, with an emphasis on "Who I Am" and "Where I Might Be Going." I would like to show you some of the activities we might use in these small-group sessions.

To help get the group started in exploring ideas and feelings, we developed a Profile exercise. You will find this in Examples IV and V.

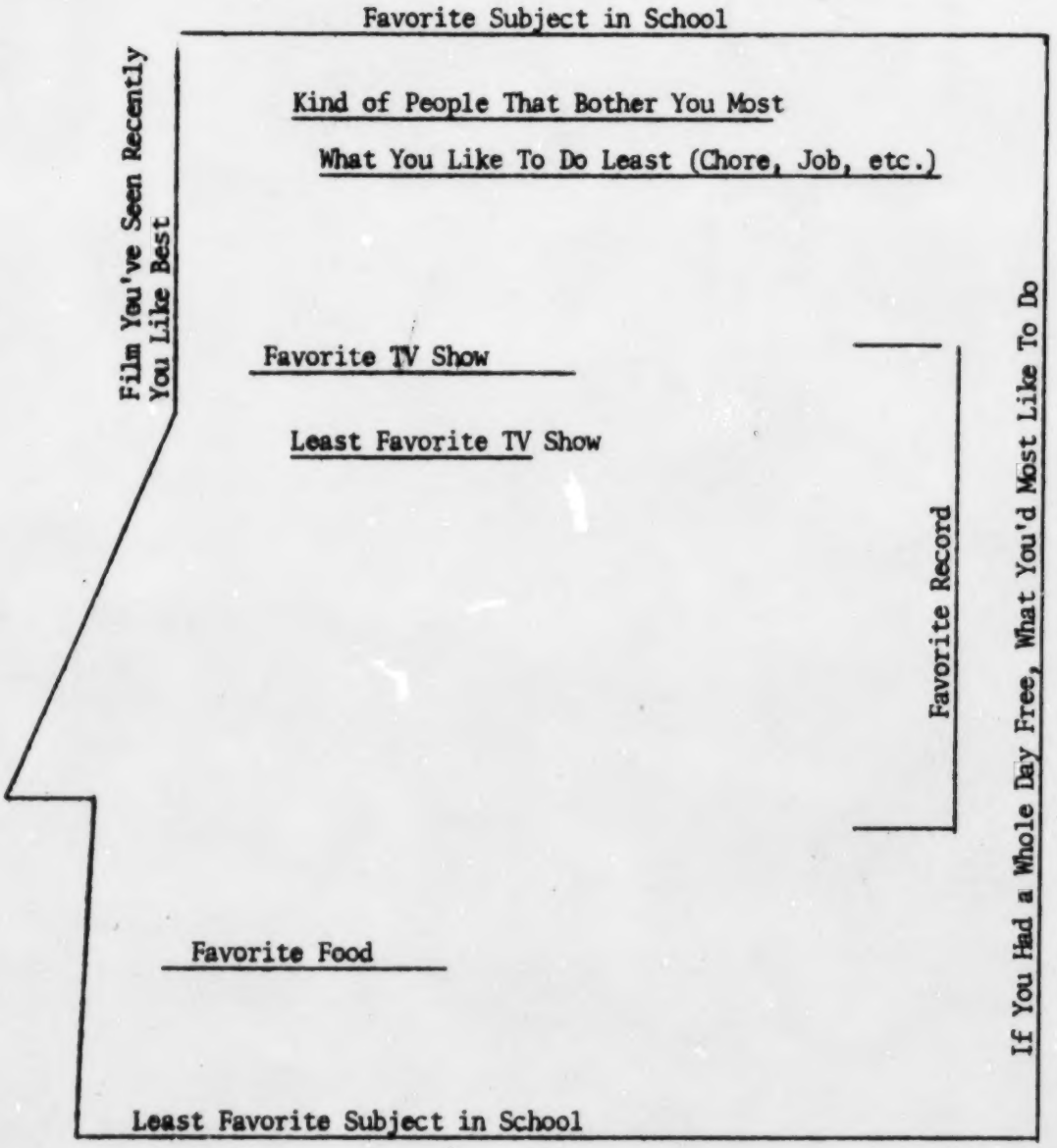
EXAMPLE IV

PROFILE #1



EXAMPLE V

PROFILE #2


Favorite Subject in School
Kind of People That Bother You Most
What You Like To Do Least (Chore, Job, etc.)
Film You've Seen Recently You Like Best
Favorite TV Show
Least Favorite TV Show
Favorite Record
If You Had a Whole Day Free, What You'd Most Like To Do
Favorite Food
Least Favorite Subject in School

I'll give you an idea about how this might be used. (It can be used in a varity of ways.) I would start with matters that are less personal I would say, "At the vary top of the head, close to the brain, write down your favorite subject in school. Put down what it really is. If it's P.E., fine. Now at the very bottom, put down your least favorite subject. Give it to that subject on the chin!

I would continue with Favorite Food, the film, the TV shows, and the Favorite Record. Then I would go up to the worry lines on the forehead. I would ask the group to put down a brief description of the Kind of People That Bother You Most on the top worry line, then What You Like To Do Least on the bottom line. I'd end up with the If You Had a Free Day line.

After the Profile is filled in, I would let the group discuss each item, comparing responses and opinions and giving some "why's" along with their answers. Hopefully, each student would learn a little more about what he or she is like and how the preferences of other people resemble -- or differ from -- his or her own.

In a later session, we planned to use Mood Figures, a new way for people to express their feelings at a particular time. These are movable human figures made from various colors of construction paper. They are designed for an individudual to take one of several differently colored figures and arrange its body according to how the individual is feeling at that time. For example, I would use one of the darker figures to express "depression," and then would discuss what an individual might do if he felt in such a mood.

The self would also be examined in other ways in a group setting. There would be a discussion, after several group meetings, of the subject "The Person I am Most Like In the Group." This would give students an opportunity, in a setting in which things would not go too far, of learning how other people look at them -- and then they could compare this with the way they see themselves.

In the academic area, there would be a unit in the social studies program on the studies of human motivation made by David McClelland and others. McClelland and his associates have designed exercises to indicate how people with high achievement motivation would react in a specific situation. For instance, how would a person with high achievement motivation play a competitive game of Ring-Toss -- tossing rings over pegs -- as compared with an individual with a lesser degree of achievement motivation? After the game, students are to consider whether they would want to have the characteristics of a person with high achievement motivation -- and they are encouraged to begin making some decisions about the person they would like to be.

In English, students would study some traditional American Indian poetry and then would work with three modern versions of Indian chants. These were chosen because they express certain basic feelings and might evoke a responsive emotion in students. You will find these chants in Example VI.

EXAMPLE VI

THREE MODERN VERSIONS OF AMERICAN INDIAN CHANTS

1

The Sudden Lightning

We know the sound of thunder does not come from
the hammerings of gods.
We know the lightning is not sparked from
sacred anvils,
But there is more than sky and earth beyond us,
There is sky within --
What of the muffled thunder hidden there?
What of the sudden lightning?

II

I am lost in silent places --
There is no echo, there is no far-away calling,
The silende does not flow, the silence is not passing.
What water of sound can wear away the rock of silence?
What water of sound?

One sound, only one sound --
Soft sound, the sound of footsteps
That come beside me,
That make the echo
Of my own footsteps,
That take my silence.

What Do You Fear?

I am not afraid of the white scars of the lightning,
I am not afraid of the footsteps of sickness.
I do not fear the fastened eyes of love
Nor the stone of hate.
I am not afraid of the stiff "no more" of death.

Then you fear nothing?

I am afraid.
I am afraid of the open plain of happiness.
I am afraid of the dragonfly of joy.
The colt leaps in the fields, there are no fences,
Only the long bars of the setting sun,
And they fade across the fields.

Now there is nothing but the brimming flow of light.

I clench my hands.

I am afraid.

How can I free my hands
To take flowing light
Between them?
How can I free my hands?
To take
The colt let loose
In fields that hold no grain
But bring the glow of light
To ripeness, harvest?

How can I free my hands?

I would use these chants to stimulate a discussion of "the sky within" that overshadows the silent places and also rises above the light brimming in the fields. Then I would encourage students to write similar chants of their own.

I have given you several examples of the kinds of activities that would be a part of a Comprehensive Counseling program. Because of the problem of time, I will describe the rest of the program briefly. The group counseling in the Second Dimension, Human Relationships, would emphasize role-playing situations. I have given you samples of these in Example VII.

EXAMPLE VII

ROLE-PLAYING SITUATIONS

1

Imagine you are a student who has been late to school three times in the last two weeks because of car trouble. You have tried to fix the car and think it is all right, but then something else happens. You have left each morning with plenty of time to get to to school, but three times Fater has intervened. The Vice-Principal calls you to his office.

Vice-Principal: I see you've been late three times in the last eight days. You know you could be suspended from school if you don't have a good excuse. What do you have to say for yourself?

Student: My car broke -- .

Vice-Principal: I've heard that one before.

II.

Amy: Hi. How've you been?

Carl: Oh, pretty good. Amy, I've wanted to talk to you.

Amy: You sure haven't tried very hard. I haven't heard from you in a week.

Carl: Well, I --.

Amy: I've been able to get my homework done for a change. I'm not always talking on the phone.

Carl: I wanted to tell you. I've been thinking things over, about us.

Amy: And what have you been thinking?

The related academic course work would include a unit in Social Studies on "People Who Are Inside -- People Who Are Outside" and would attempt to deal with some of the prejudices expressed by students. For example, one of the readings, the section called "George and His Lois" from Children of Crisis by Robert Coles, tells in a restrained

and moving fashion of the year Lois, who was black, spent as a senior in a newly-integrated high school in Georgia. Lois was one of two black students in the high school, and she tried to smile whenever anyone said insulting things to her. A fellow-student, George, described her: "She's as tense as can be; I can tell. She sits around with no one to talk with, and you can see her worrying about what's going to come next. I've seen her eyes moving back and forth. She tries to see what's happening around her, but she's afraid to move her head and look."

Lois was surrounded by empty seats, and no one would work with her in the science class. George's closest friend put a message in her locker saying, "Go back to Africa." By Christmas, Lois was no longer able tosmile. She tried to read her books, but her eyes were not able to move across the page.

Lois wore a new dress after Easter, and the other students made jokes about it. Some of the boys kept calling her house and asking for dates. She politely refused.

Lois could not attend the seniors' picnic or banquet and dance. State police land was segregated; so were all the restaurants at the time.

But the graduation ceremony was something else. She had to be a part of that. Most of the students still refused to sit near Lois in class or walk close to her in the halls. Yet school tradition required that the students march to the stage in pairs for the graduatinn ceremonies. Some one would have to sit beside Lois on the platform. Lois had little interest in any of these questions. She was willing to accept her diploma in the solitude she had come to know all year. Her family ahd no more interest than Lois in the final ceremonies. They would remember that she had survived a bitter year.

The graduation marching order was changed. Tradition was forgotten. The students walked in one by one, in single file. Two girls agreed to sit beside Lois on the platform.

The day after graduation, the students exchanged autographs. Lois stood there by herself. Then two girls walked up to Lois and began talking and they asked for her autograph. George went up to her. He asked to exchange autographs. She said yes. In her book, he wrote, "Best wishes." In his book, she wrote, "Good luck. Lois."

If students can feel what it is like to be shut out for no reason except that one was born in a certain way, perhaps they can begin to reach beyond themselves toward an understanding of and a feeling for others on a level other than that of "I want this" or "This is mine." It may be that they can have a sense of something other than the Me and Now that ultimately is so limiting and constricting and isolating.

The Third Dimension, Family Counseling, would include counseling sessions with parents and with families as a whole, if this were possible. I have worked for five years with the parents of more than 200 students who were having difficulties in school, and I found that I was often dealing with similar basic fears on the part of parents. There were also common elements in the parent-child relationship in many of these cases. I kept records of my interviews with parents and analyzed the data I obtained. In Example VIII, you will find data concerning the fears most common among the parents I worked with.

EXAMPLE VIII

COMMON FEARS OF 200 PARENTS OF STUDENTS HAVING DIFFICULTIES IN SCHOOL

90% expressed fears that they were inadequate as parents.

90% expressed fears that no one would really listen to their feelings and perceptions about their child.

80% of the parents expressed fears that their child might not be successful in adult life.

75% of the parents stated fears that their child might be a failure in school.

65% expressed a fear that their child might hurt other people.

60% expressed fears that their aspirations for the child were too high and indicated they had guilt feelings about this.

Certainly such fears would communicate themselves in many ways to the child, as would a parent's constant sense of disappointment and bewilderment. For this reason, the Family Counseling Program may be essential if there are to be significant changes in the attitudes and perceptions of the students involved. One student in the group of six said of his father: "He messed up my life." Guilt, blame, the tangle of interrelationships -- facing and dealing with these emotions may be the first step toward the maturity we wanted for our students.

The last Dimension is that of Vocational and Educational Counseling. It was designed to provide students with contacts with responsible adults from a variety of vocational fields -- a young doctor, a computer programmer, a social worker, a television newsman, people who had interests deeper than the quality of the French fries at various fast-food franchises or who cared about more than whether a car had big wheels or regular wheels in the rear. It was designed to give young people work experiences in hospitals or day-care centers and laboratories, not just in pizza parlors or at the pumps in gasoline stations. In addition, a unit in Social Studies would deal with learning to make choices on the basis of the best evidence available and in terms of their possible consequences. I have a final example for you, a sample of the kinds of material that would be used in a unit of this kind.

EXAMPLE IX

FOOTBALL DEGREE ISN'T WORTH A NICKEL OFF THE FIELD
A Condensation Of An Article In The Kansas City Star, Sunday, September 16, 1979

A career in professional sports is a risk, physically and otherwise. If the surgeon's knife doesn't get you, the young hotshot eventually will. The rewards -- are great, but so are the pitfalls.

Too often, athletes stake everything on the gamble that their sport will provide for them indefinitely. And too often, when they find that it won't, it's too late. They have nothing to turn to. No job. No trade. No degree.

The Kansas City Chiefs are a typical example. Of their 37 veterans, only 9 earned degrees during their playing careers at college. That's less than 20 percent

Now that obviously doesn't mean that the other 80 percent will become gutter rats when they playing days are over. Some will invest wisely, others wil have gone back to school and gotten degrees. But some will have done neither and, consequently, face a traumatic adjustment. They're off the gravy train for the first time since junior high and it's tough.

Bob Brewer's a twenty-two-year-old of the latter variety. He was one of the first players cut during the training camp. Brewer had known nothing but success since taking up football in the seventh grade.

"It had become a very big part of my life -- everything," he said. "As soon as the man tells you you're gone, you've got to start thinking about things you'd never really had to consider before. I wasn't prepared for what happened ....it scared hell out of me....A lot of bills came rolling in and I was the one who had to pay them."

Brewer realized that "what it amounts to is having to start at the bottom again." One of his friends had made it in pro ball, and the friend had a beautiful house, clothes and the whole bit.

"You see how guys like that are living and you want to be a part of it," Brewer said.

For awhile, he waited for a phone call from another team, hoping they would want him to play for them. But the phone call never came.

Brewer is disappointed that professional football didn't work out, but he is glad he is still young enough to pick up and still make something out of life -- away from sports.

I have presented what seems to be a complicated and demanding program. I have done this because I feel anything less than this would not really meet the needs of the adolescents I have described to you. I am not at all sure these adolescents are an isolated group. There are probably many, many more who have similar outlooks and limitations.

It is easy to say, "Why worry? After all, you're only young once."

But you are only old once, and that may be for a long, long time.

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